

St., Maine Veterans Home. Even there, Mom and Dad shared a room until Dad's recovery — Mom remained until her death. Even though Dad was using a walker in recent years, he was quite active. He enjoyed going to lunch with his devoted sister-in-law Eileen Seiser, and he liked to share family gatherings

Dad at the Maine Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Mount Vernon Road, Augusta, on Monday, March 7, at 1 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Dad's memory to HealthReach Hospice, P.O. Box 828 Waterville, ME 04903; or to Maine Veterans Home, 310 Cony Road, Augusta, ME 04330.

# Anti-smoking bill

**Sen. Saviello, R-Wilton, contended that taxpayers shouldn't have to pay medical expenses for smokers through the state's MaineCare program. He had to backtrack, however, after learning that his bill would violate a federal law that stipulates eligibility requirements for MaineCare, which is funded largely by the federal government.**

age of recipients who smoked dropped from 38 to 28.

Rep. Mark Eves, D-Berwick, a former smoker, said many low-income people smoke because it's stressful to live in poverty.

to other parts of the health care system, without addressing the underlying problem.

"Encouraging more smokers to quit is a smart, cost-effective strategy, even in the short

## BRIEFS

### New website to help with pest control

AUGUSTA — A new website to be launched at the Portland Flower Show on March 11 will help homeowners with pest management.

The Maine Integrated Pest Management Council will launch a website, designed to help Maine homeowners identify the most common pests found in their homes and gardens, and point them to the most up-to-date information on pest management, with an emphasis on low-risk methods.

The Maine Board of Pesticides Control, Maine Department of Agriculture, Maine Forest Service, and University of Maine Cooperative Extension collaborated on the website.

The 2011 Portland Flower Show will be held March 10-13 at the Portland Company Marine Complex, 58 Fore St., on the Portland waterfront.

### Mainer sent packing on 'The Bachelor'

bachelor Brad Womack narrowed the field to the final two women.

"The Bachelor" started off in January with 30 women competing for Womack's affection. Hebert, who is from the northern Maine town of Madawaska and now attends dental school in Philadelphia, was one of three women still in the running on Monday's show.

### Husson OKs new College of Business

BANGOR — Husson University's board has approved a new College of Business comprising four schools.

Under the structure announced Monday, the four schools will include accounting; business and management; hospitality, sport, and tourism management, and legal studies.

Ron Nykiel, dean of the College of Business, says the board's action provides an appropriate structure for Husson's growing academic offerings.

Husson says its College of Business has 1,400 students and is Maine's largest, with courses offered in Bangor, Portland, Presque Isle and this fall in York County.





Posted: March 17  
Updated: Today at 10:12 PM

## **Open for business**

### **Pest management on Web**

The Maine Integrated Pest Management Council has launched its new website, <http://gotpests.org>.

The site is designed to help Maine homeowners identify the most common pests found in their homes and gardens, with information on managing those infestations with low-risk methods.

The council was established by the Maine Legislature to promote and enhance implementation of practices that reduce or minimize the harmful environmental effects of pesticides. The council also promotes healthy landscapes through ecologically based practices that minimize reliance on water, fertilizer and pesticides.

### **Networking site launched**

[MyNetKing.com](http://MyNetKing.com), a new networking site for Maine businesses, has launched.

The site offers membership for a limited group of professionals on a first-come, first-served basis. Just two business professionals from each profession and each ZIP code may join.

Businessman Andrew Stone founded the site as a connecting point to establish virtual meetings and face-to-face meetings, and to track business referrals online without the restriction of multiple networking groups. For more details, go to the site.

### **Kennebunk Savings in N.H.**

Kennebunk Savings, an independent community bank and full-service financial institution founded in 1871, has opened its first New Hampshire branch at 111 Maplewood Ave. in Portsmouth.

The new branch offers business and retail banking, as well as investment, residential mortgage and commercial insurance services.

The Portsmouth team includes John Burcke, vice president and retail market manager; Martha Bertsimas, assistant manager; Megan Pratt, senior sales and service representative; Ryan Bishop, vice president and corporate lender; Jamie Thompson, vice president and corporate lender; Danny Edgecomb, insurance sales executive; and Ryan Hale, vice president and financial consultant.

Branch hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

For more details, go to [www.kennebunksavings.com/nh](http://www.kennebunksavings.com/nh) or call (603) 766-6455.

### **Advantage Funeral opens**

Advantage Funeral & Cremation Services has opened for business at 981 Forest Ave. in Portland.



# Health & Fitness

Special pages of the St. John Valley Times



- Contributed photo

## SNO DONATES FUNDS TO CARY CRITICAL CARE TRANSPORT TEAM

Members of the University of Maine at Fort Kent Student Nurse Organization recently presented a \$1,800 check to the Cary Medical Center Critical Care Transport Team. The student nurses hold annual fundraisers to support their senior graduation pinning ceremony and to donate funds to local health-related projects. In recent years, SNO has donated fundraising proceeds to the Eagle Lake Jaws of Life project and to a fellow nurse who traveled to Haiti to assist with the earthquake relief effort. This year's donation will help purchase jackets for the transport service flight crew. The Critical Care Transport Service in Caribou is comprised of Fresh Air LLC, Caribou's air ambulance service, the Caribou Fire and Ambulance Department and Cary Medical Center staff. At the recent presentation were Tim Guerrette, Critical Care Paramedic; Chief Roy Woods of the Caribou Fire and Ambulance Service; SNO members Amanda Pelletier and Kristen Goupille; Beth Collamore, Cary Emergency Room Physician and Flight Team Medical Director; SNO member Kelsey King; and Cary flight crew members Ann King and Jim Flavin.

## PESTICIDE DEADLINE NEARS

**ST. JOHN VALLEY** - Landowners who want advance notice of aerial pesticides sprayed near their homes or property have until March 15 to register with a statewide notification list. The Maine Pesticide Notification Registry offers a free registry where any resident, owner, or lessee of property in Maine can be listed to receive advance notice of impending aerial or air-carrier pesticide spraying within 1,320 feet (500 feet for fruit trees or Christmas trees) of the registrant's property. For more information, visit <http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/laws/online-registry.htm>.

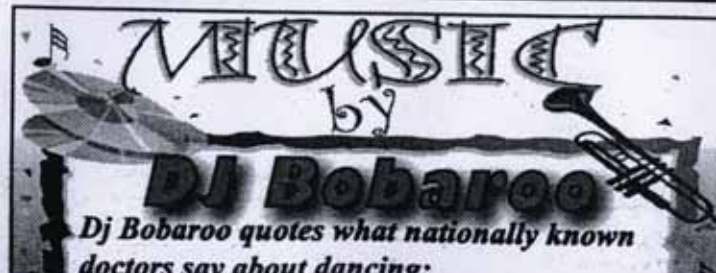


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## FULL STORY



## Top Story

## NEW ENGLAND ENTOMOLOGIST BRINGS EXPERTISE TO WAR ON BED BUGS

2/23/2011

Richard Stevenson Jr., co-president of Maine-based Modern Pest Services, will head to Washington D.C. next month to meet with his fellow members of the National Pest Management Association's Blue Ribbon Bed Bug Task Force.

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BRUNSWICK, Maine. — Richard Stevenson Jr., co-president of Maine-based **Modern Pest Services**, will head to Washington D.C. next month to meet with his fellow members of the **National Pest Management Association's** Blue Ribbon Bed Bug Task Force.

The task force, which Stevenson was named to last year, will reconvene to develop its industry-wide comprehensive response, including education, standards, policy and research, to the recent bed bug outbreak. The group, made up of prominent researchers, pest management professionals and regulators, is responsible for the recently released NPMA's Best Management Practices for Bed Bugs, considered a key defense in the war against infestation. The guidelines, for use by both industry professionals and consumers, provide complete information on what to look for in bed bug service agreements, clarity on what to do with furniture exposed to bed bugs, guidance on the effective use of dogs for bed bug inspection, and information on bed bug control methods.

"Bed bugs have become a pandemic and previously there wasn't organization from any other entity to stop the spread. The National Pest Management Association is taking the lead here," Stevenson says. "By developing and sharing our best management practices and continuing to put our best efforts forward, our task force is dedicated to stopping this pandemic."

Stevenson grew up working in Modern Pest Services, a third-generation family-owned company. He has a degree in environmental entomology and is a board certified entomologist. He has served on the New England Pest Management Association's Board of Directors and currently serves on the Maine Board of Pesticides Control.

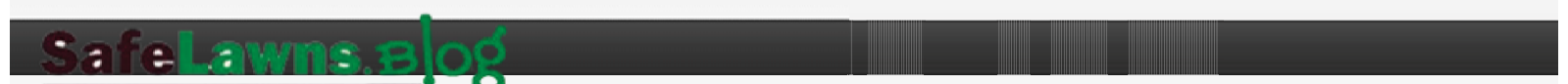
"We're proud that Richard was selected to participate in this important project," says Scott Stevenson, company co-president. "It speaks to Modern Pest Service's standing in the industry that his expertise is recognized by the NPMA and we know his task force will successfully meet its goals."

For more information please visit [www.modernpest.com](http://www.modernpest.com)

**Have a fly problem?** 







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- How-To Information
- Pesticide Toxicity
- Pesticide Toxicity

# Maine’s School Pesticide Bill Earns Bi-Partisan Support

Wed, Mar 2, 2011

Pesticide Toxicity

Our goal of seeing the Safe Schoolgrounds Movement spread to every state in the union took a first step forward in Maine yesterday when Rep. Mary Nelson (D-Falmouth) announced she has strong bi-partisan sponsorship for bill LR 1178.

“An Act to Protect Children’s Health & Promote Safe School Grounds By Limiting Pesticides” was co-sponsored yesterday by Senator Justin Alfond (D-Portland, Senate Minority Asst. Leader), Rep. Richard Wagner (D-Lewiston), Andrew O'Brien (D-Lincolnville) Terry K. Morrison (D-South Portland), Senator Richard Woodbury (I-Yarmouth); Rep. David Richardson (R-Carmel); Rep. Meredith Strang Burgess (R-Cumberland), Rep. Wesley Richardson (R-Warren); Rep. Dana L. Dow (R-Waldoboro).

In the midst of a decidedly anti-environmental agenda established by Maine’s new governor, Paul LePage, these four Republicans are clearly distancing themselves from much of the bluster coming out of the state capitol in Augusta. The team of citizens who have been pushing for this, spearheaded by community organizer [Laura Stevens of the Toxics Action Center](#), is encouraging all Maine citizens to write to their elected officials and ask them to support LR 1178 when it comes up for debate sometime later this spring.

“We can not continue to poison our children while they are playing on school grounds,” said Marsha Smith, a member of the Citizens for Healthy Schoolgrounds coalition. Smith helped lead the effort to adopt the state’s first municipal pesticide policy in Camden in 2009.

If you would like to see a copy of the exact wording of the bill that is primarily aimed at eliminating synthetic chemical weed killers from school grounds, email [Paul@SafeLawns.org](mailto:Paul@SafeLawns.org).

Share and Enjoy:

This post was written by:

Paul Tukey - who has written 657 posts on Safelawns Daily Post and Q&A Blog.

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★ Former Chemical Applicator: 'I Am Literally Ashamed of Myself for Being Part of It'

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★ Imidacloprid: What You Must Know Now

★ Government Agency: We Must Reduce Toxics

★ Groundcover Wednesday: Lemon Thyme

## Upcoming Events

- Mar 20
- Organic Lawn Care: How & Why featuring Paul Tukey
- Mar 23
- Film Screening: A Chemical Reaction, Scarborough, Maine
- Film Screening: A Chemical Reaction, Oceanport, NJ
- Mar 28
- Film Screening, A Chemical Reaction, Frederick, Md.
- Mar 30
- Landscaping at the Water's Edge Symposium
- Mar 31

WRITTEN BY CYNDI WOOD

THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2011 AT 8:04 AM

**BROOKSVILLE** — Voters Monday rejected by a narrow 20-vote margin a proposed ordinance that would have prohibited all aerial and air-carrier spraying of blueberry fields in town.

The vote was 167 against the ordinance and 147 in favor.

Also voted down was the proposed "Local Food and Community Self-Governance Ordinance." The ordinance would have made local food producers and processors exempt from licensing and inspection requirements when dealing directly with local consumers.

The vote was 161 against and 152 in favor.

An ordinance designed to regulate wireless communications towers in town passed 163-149.

Town business continued Tuesday night, when about 65 residents gathered at Brooksville Elementary School for the annual Town Meeting.

The school budget items passed with little comment. Union 93 Superintendent Mark Hurvitt explained that the \$1,703,061 budget was up 3.84 percent or \$62,935 from last year because of an increase in high school students.

Voters approved appropriating \$30,000 for the Walker Pond access project with Sedgwick.

John Gray, chairman of the Board of Selectmen, said the towns have received a license from the state Department of Environmental Protection to build a 10-foot road to the shore.

He said the towns are now in a position to put the project out to bid to figure out how much it will cost.

Voters also agreed to triple the annual contribution to the fire truck reserve to \$30,000 in anticipation of the need to purchase a new engine.

Also approved was \$195,000 for the 2011 Winter Roads Account.

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# BANGOR DAILY NEWS

## Maine towns try to loosen reins on local farms

The Associated Press

Posted March 18, 2011, at 8:39 p.m.

PENOBSCOT, Maine — Two small towns have passed ordinances that would make small-scale farmers exempt from state and federal regulations if they sell foods they process directly to consumers.

At town meetings this month, residents in the Hancock County towns of Sedgwick and Penobscot passed ordinances that supporters say will help small-scale farming and food processing operations. A state lawmaker is proposing a state law that would give similar exemptions.

Local communities should have the right to decide for themselves on rules over small farms that process food — ranging from chickens to cheese to jars of jam — that is sold to people in their own area, said Heather Retberg of Quill's End Farm in Penobscot, which sells farm-raised beef, pork and lamb, as well as eggs.

“What the ordinance does is put the rule of law behind the towns,” Retberg said. “We feel like if you’re growing food by the community and for the community, it’s up to the community to decide how to govern that food system.”

Department of Agriculture Commissioner Walter Whitcomb said the attorney general’s office has written an opinion that says the local ordinances are trumped by state and federal laws and are therefore invalid.

Whitcomb, a dairy farmer, sympathizes with small-scale farmers and food processors, but said regulatory oversight is critical when it comes to food safety. Inspectors in the past have found people working on outboard motors or changing their baby’s diapers on food-preparation surfaces, he said.

“They’re suggesting what would amount to a huge relaxation of our laws,” he said.

There are hundreds of small farms in Maine that grow vegetables, cattle, pigs, sheep and other food items that are typically sold to people who live near those farms. Many farmers make foods such as jams, cheese and pies in their kitchens and then sell them out of their home stores or farm stands.

Public hearings are being held next week in Augusta on several legislative bills that would relax or streamline laws regarding farm food production, slaughterhouses and the sale of raw milk.

Bob St. Peter, who operates Saving Seeds Farm in Sedgwick, said small farms could use a streamlined regulatory system to be able to grow.

“We aren’t saying all regulation is bad. We’re saying we need certain exemptions so we can grow and preserve the tradition of selling food to our neighbors without having to fill out regulatory forms and having our strawberry jam recipe tested for \$10,” he said.

The new Penobscot ordinance won’t change how Retberg and her husband deal with their existing line of products, since they use a federally certified facility to butcher their cows, pigs and sheep.

But they plan to start processing chickens on their farm, something they’d be forbidden from doing under existing state regulations without constructing a separate chicken-processing building, she said. She wonders if state agricultural officials will show up at her door and tell her to stop.

<http://new.bangordailynews.com/2011/03/18/business/maine-towns-try-to-loosen-reins-on-local-farms/> printed on



Article published Mar 17, 2011

## **State lawmakers inch toward regulatory reforms**

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AUGUSTA (AP) — With a March 31 deadline looming, a special legislative committee is inching toward its goal of agreeing on a package of bills to paint a friendlier face on Maine's environmental and business regulations, while keeping some of the proposals for itself and distributing others to several committees.

"We're still working our way through it. We're moving forward," said Senate Majority Leader Jonathan Courtney. The Springvale Republican chairs the Committee on Regulatory Fairness and Reform, which held its latest work session last Thursday on the bill dubbed Legislative Document, or LD 1.

The committee, which held seven public meetings throughout the state — including one in Sanford — to gather ideas from the public has winnowed its way through 1,500 pages of testimony to come up with 300 recommendations. More than 60 proposals have also been submitted by Gov. Paul LePage's administration as he followed up on campaign promises to make the state more business friendly and grow jobs.

LePage isn't concerned about which committee handles what, just that "the policies move forward," spokesman Dan Demeritt said.

The governor's proposals range from a requirement that any new regulation accompany an analysis of how it will affect jobs, a small business ombudsman to help businesses navigate the bureaucracy, replacement of the Board of Environmental Protection with an appeals panel, speedier review of permit applications and a requirement that all regulations be based on "sound science."

Through several work sessions, the committee has worked its way through those and other recommendations, which have drawn a wave of protest from environmental groups and praise from businesses. It has also parceled out scores of proposals to legislative committees with expertise in those policy areas, while keeping more than three dozen for itself to be bound up in one big omnibus bill.

The regulatory reform committee will keep, for example, the jobs impact analysis, ombudsman proposal, and removal of duplicative environmental regulations.

It is parceling out to the agriculture committee a plan to revamp the Board of Pesticides Control, to the labor and commerce committee proposals addressing seasonal labor, wage rates and family medical leave. The natural resources committee will look at proposals to ease laws to keep dangerous chemicals, including bisphenol A, out of consumer products, and also relax laws protecting vernal pools and regulating snow dumping.

A Democrat serving on the regulatory reform committee, Sen. Seth Goodall of Richmond, said the committee remains committed to a self-imposed March 31 deadline to report out a consensus package encompassing the bills it is holding for itself. That deadline marks roughly the halfway point in the session.

But Goodall left open the possibility that deadline will pass as lawmakers scrutinize the impact of changes.

"We don't want to rush the process, because we don't want any unintended consequences," Goodall said.

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### LePage's "Flexibility" Comments Leave Some Baffled

02/28/2011    Reported By: [Susan Sharon](#)

In his interview with Politico.com, and in interviews with other reporters covering the meeting of the National Governor's Association, Gov. Paul LePage also reiterated his call for flexibility from federal regulations that he says make it more difficult to expand business and create jobs in Maine. But the governor's suggestions that federal regulations around forest management and farming ought to be relaxed left some scratching their heads.

#### Related Media

**LePage's "Flexibility" Comments Leave Some Baffled**  
Originally Aired: 2/28/2011 5:30 PM

  
Duration:  
2:56

Gov. LePage told Politico.com and other media outlets that he wants flexibility dealing with health care reform and Medicaid eligibility requirements. And then he went on to say this:

"My biggest flexibility that I'm looking for is allow us to use our forest; allow us to fish in the ocean; allow us to grow crops. And those are the flexibilities that we need from the federal government to allow us to do the things we need to do to create jobs and get our people working and get our economy back on track."

Members of Maine's Congressional delegation have previously called on the federal government to ease some fishing regulations. But LePage's reference to forest use leaves Cathy Johnson, the North Woods Project Director of the Natural Resources Council of Maine baffled.

"Well, I have no idea what he's talking about," she says. "The federal government doesn't tell Maine how to manage its forests. The only law addressing how forests are managed, Maine's Forest Practices Act, was passed in the late 1980s by the Maine Legislature. There are no federal laws that tell us how to manage the forest."

Dan Demeritt, a spokesman for Gov. LePage says the governor has been concerned about the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed new rules restricting carbon emissions from biomass-fired power plants--biomass, of course, being a by-product of wood harvesting.

"That could have a big impact on our forest products industry," DeMeritt says. "You know how we use--how we generate electricity at plants, and the governor is concerned that we need the flexibility to use our by-products of our forest products industry and eliminate the waste and create electricity while we do it."

But under pressure from some members of Congress, including members of Maine's delegation, and the biomass industry, which complained that the rules could make it difficult to develop a new source of energy, the EPA recently announced it would defer a decision on the proposed rules for three years to seek "further independent scientific analysis." So Gov. LePage doesn't have to worry about carbon emissions rules, at least for the time being.

Demeritt was unclear about the governor's concern about federal regulations around growing crops. But Russell Libby of the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardners' Association says the federal government has no role in crop planting in the state of Maine.

"The only people who face limitations are those who are either, one, voluntarily putting their land in a conservation program like the Conservation Reserve Program; or, two, people who are getting federal crop supports for crops that they grow, and they're limited in the number of acres they can grow from year to year because they're getting federal support for that," Libby says.

Libby says even rules around pesticide application and other farming restrictions are made at the the state level. In reality, he says, there are no restrictions on peoples' ability to plant crops, to use pesticides on their crops or to plant organic crops.

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**Bills to Restrict Medical Care of Minors Generate Controversy**

» News » Maine Headline News

Maine Group Blasts "Anti-Environmental" Agenda

03/01/2011 11:22 AM ET

At a news conference this morning, the Natural Resources Council of Maine said dozens of bills state lawmakers are now considering amount to a "widespread assault" on state laws that safeguard air and water quality, and protect people from exposure to toxic chemicals.

Maine environmentalists today decried what they described as a "widespread assault" on state laws that safeguard Maine's air and water quality, and protect people from exposure to chemicals.



At an Augusta news conference today, the Natural Resources Council of Maine, the state's largest environmental lobbying group, detailed what it calls the 50 worst bills for Maine's environment.

"We have never seen such a widespread assault on the laws that protect Maine's clean air, clean water, and the health of Maine people and wildlife," said NRCM Advocacy Director Pete Didisheim. "If implemented, this sweeping anti-environment agenda would put Maine people out of work, increase our exposure to toxic chemicals, damage Maine's \$10 billion tourism economy, and harm Maine's most important asset--the quality of our environment."


Among the "worst" bills, the group says, is one that would repeal the state's bottle law, and another that would eliminate Maine's energy efficiency building codes.

Gov. Paul LePage has sought changes to several environmental laws that it believes are standing in the way of economic growth, but NRCM officials today said the dozens of changes Maine lawmakers are now considering go beyond the governor's proposals. They say if the laws are enacted, it will hurt, not help, the state's economy.

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# THE WORKING WATERFRONT



Posted: December 29th, 2010 | ENVIRONMENT, MARINE  
Article

## Are salmon pen pesticides killing lobsters?

by Bob Gustafson

Are pesticides used to kill sea lice in Bay of Fundy salmon pens also killing lobsters?

The Fundy North Fishermen's Association (FNFA), based in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, believes they are, according to Sheena Young, FNFA program director.

But the Atlantic Canada Fish Farmers Association (ACFFA), based in, Letang, New Brunswick, maintains that the lobsters are dying from other causes, according to Pamela Parker, ACFFA executive director.

Tests conducted in the area by Environment Canada (EC) on October 27 produced the following results, according to their spokesman Mark Johnson. Johnson said, "Environment Canada's environmental enforcement officers were on site October 27, 2010, to monitor compliance with the Fisheries Act during an in-pen treatment of sea lice using tarps and the chemical bath AlphaMax. Enforcement officers used three sets of lobsters to assess the impact of the AlphaMax product on non-target species outside the treatment pen."

He explained, "The first set of 30 lobsters were a negative control group placed outside the reach of the plume resulting from the in-pen treatment using AlphaMax. These lobsters showed no impact from the chemical bath."

Johnson continued: "The second set of 30 lobsters were a positive control placed directly inside the treatment pen. All of the lobsters in this group died following exposure to the AlphaMax treatment."

He concluded: "The third set of 60 lobsters were attached to buoys and drifted with the plume leaving the pen. Ninety minutes after the AlphaMax treatment all 60 lobsters within the plume were classified by a Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) biologist as either dead (70% of them) or dying. The surviving lobsters were taken to DFO's lab in St. Andrews and placed in clean sea water, but they subsequently died overnight."

FNFA's Young said of the Environment Canada's tests, "We express full support for Environment Canada's work."

She added, "We have been told repeatedly by the aquaculture industry and by the Province of New Brunswick that pesticides are 'used up' by the time the tarps are released and the effluent is not harmful to marine life. We now have reason to doubt this claim."

Young continued, "The lobsters used in the study were 1½- to 2-pound lobsters. Although such a large lobster is generally not found floating or swimming near the sea surface, all stages of lobster larvae live as part of the plankton floating at the surface. Larval and juvenile lobsters are much more susceptible to pesticides such as AlphaMax than adult lobsters. If the pesticide kills adult lobsters it will certainly kill young lobsters."

ACFFA's Parker clearly is not applauding the Environment Canada tests.

"I have been told that Environment Canada enforcement officers did put lobsters directly inside a net pen during a tarp treatment and, following release of the tarp after the treatment was completed, towed lobster in cages behind a boat for over 2 hours in areas where they suspected the treatment product might be present," she said.

Parker continued, "The EC activity was not based on a real life scenario on how we use the treatment product (i.e. We do everything we can to make sure lobster are not exposed to the product) nor on the natural positioning of the lobster (on the sea bed).

She added, "We were not present during this exercise, nor have we been informed on the results, so I don't feel qualified to comment. What I can say is that we are not confident that this project followed the methodology generally accepted and used in sentinel species research. This is research we had intended to conduct again this year (we did this research on farms last year) in collaboration with DFO and the Province of New Brunswick researchers."

Young responded, "These lobsters were not dragged for two and a half hours as Ms. Parker claims. A boat was used to divert the floating buoys away from adjacent cages and then released to float freely again.

As for Parker's criticism that the tests were not conducted in a real-life scenario Young said, "A real-life scenario would likely yield much worse results than what was seen that day."

She concluded, "We applaud Environment Canada for protecting the marine ecosystem and our local fishing communities that depend on its health."

*Bob Gustafson is a freelance writer who lives in Eastport.*

## Pesticide bill continues to move in Congress

Mon, 2011-03-21 16:05

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee overwhelmingly approved a bill to eliminate the requirement for certain pesticide uses to have a Clean Water Act (CWA) permit.

H.R. 872, the “Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2011,” is bipartisan legislation that was introduced in the House by Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee Chairman Gibbs, R-Ohio, Transportation Committee Member and Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee’s Subcommittee on Nutrition and Horticulture Schmidt, R-Ohio, and other members. The Committee approved the legislation by a vote of 46 to 8.

The bill reverses a 2009 decision of the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in *National Cotton Council v. EPA*. This decision vacated a 2006 EPA rule and long-standing interpretation that the application of a pesticide for its intended purpose and in compliance with the requirements of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) does not also require a separate permit under the CWA.

The court-ordered deadline for EPA to promulgate the new permitting process for pesticides is April 9, 2011. EPA has estimated that approximately 365,000 pesticide users, including state agencies, cities, counties, mosquito control districts, water districts, pesticide applicators, farmers, ranchers, forest managers, and scientists that perform 5.6 million pesticide applications annually will be affected by the court’s ruling. This mandate virtually would double the number of entities currently subject to National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting under the CWA.

H.R. 872 exempts from the NPDES permitting process a discharge to waters involving the application of a pesticide authorized for sale, distribution, or use under FIFRA, where the pesticide is used for its intended purpose and the use is in compliance with pesticide label requirements. The legislation would amend FIFRA and the CWA to clarify Congressional intent and eliminate the duplicative NPDES requirement.

The bill was reported unanimously out of the House Agriculture Committee last week. Currently, 23 Democrats and 70 Republicans are official cosponsors. Bill proponents would like to see it pass the House within the next two weeks.

The NCC issued an Action Alert for members to contact their Representatives to urge them to co-sponsor the bill if they already are not a co-sponsor. The alert and current list of cosponsors are available on the NCC’s website at [www.cotton.org](http://www.cotton.org).

No

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**Source URL:** <http://westernfarmpress.com/government/pesticide-bill-continues-move-congress>





# South Berwick

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## Maine

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## Spring Yardscaping Workshops at Marshwood High School

[Printer-Friendly Version](#)

We have attached a link for two YardScaping Workshops. We hope you can attend one. This letter provides you with some background information on the YardScaping program and South Berwick's connection to it.

Because of its size, the Town is regulated by a general permit through the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for the discharge of stormwater through its separate storm sewer system (MS4). In short, this is called the "MS4 general permit" and it went into effect in 2003. It required the Town to develop a 5-year plan to protect stormwater from pollution and to educate the public on what they can do to make a difference in stormwater quality.

The Town chose the YardScaping program because it offers homeowners alternatives to applying pesticides and fertilizers to their lawn. Pesticides and fertilizers don't disappear after they are applied; they run off the surface of the land into local water bodies like the Great Works River and Quamphegan Brook and eventually move on into the Piscataqua Estuary. These contaminants can and do have adverse effects on our children, our pets, and aquatic species.

Even if you do not live near one of these water bodies, chances are the storm drains or ditches outside your home will reach one. At the workshop you will learn about pest control, soil testing, plant and grass seed selection, composting and much more. So you *can* make a difference in the health of Piscataqua Bay! You can find more information about the YardScaping program at [www.yardscaping.org](http://www.yardscaping.org).

Please join us. Registration for the workshop is just five dollars. Presentation is by a master gardener from Maine. Don't forget the door prize! We hope to see you there.

Sincerely,  
Perry A. Ellsworth  
Town Manager

[http://southberwickmaine.org/Public\\_Documents/SouthBerwickME\\_DPW/YardscapingWorkshops\\_2011.pdf](http://southberwickmaine.org/Public_Documents/SouthBerwickME_DPW/YardscapingWorkshops_2011.pdf)

## Workshops held to publicize storm water protection

By **Suzanna Vicinus**

news@seacoastonline.com

March 17, 2011 2:00 AM

SOUTH BERWICK, Maine — The town invites the public to attend "YardScaping" workshops, offering homeowners alternatives to applying pesticides and fertilizers to their lawn, which negatively affects the quality of run-off storm water.

The programs, regulated by a general permit through the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, are part of the town's five-year plan to protect storm water from pollution and to educate the public on what residents can do to make a difference in storm water quality.

Taught by a master gardener, the workshops will provide lessons on pest control, soil testing, plant and grass seed selection and composting.

Locally applied pesticides and fertilizers run off the surface of the land into local water bodies including the Great Works River, Quampegan Brook and the Piscataqua Estuary. These contaminants have adverse effects on local wildlife and aquatic species.

Workshops are offered from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, March 17 and from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, April 2 at Marshwood High School. The cost is \$5. To register, call Marshwood Adult Education at (207) 384-5703.



for a healthy maine



Over 2.9 million pounds of yard care pesticides were brought into Maine in 2004. This number has tripled since 1995 and coincides with a triple explosion in yard care companies in Maine.

## Maine YardScaping Workshop

Thursday March 17, 2011

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

-or-

Saturday, April 2

9:30 to 11:30 pm

**Both Workshops at Marshwood High School**

Come learn the six step program to reduce your reliance on pesticides, fertilizers, and water, and minimize polluted runoff from stormwater. Sponsored by: The Towns of Eliot and South Berwick and the Maine Board of Pesticide Control's "YardScaping" program.



Marshwood High School  
260 Route 236  
South Berwick, Maine 03908


**TO SIGN UP OR FOR MORE INFORMATION ON EITHER OF THESE WORKSHOPS CONTACT:  
MARSHWOOD ADULT EDUCATION AT 207-384-5703**

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Dec 30, 2010

# Green lawns require work, but not always chemicals

11:38 AM

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By Elizabeth Weise, USA TODAY

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Yes, it's winter now. But for those dreaming of spring and lush, green lawns, the news from Indiana is that a trip to the chemical shelf at the garden center isn't your only option. Though, counsel turf grass researchers at [Purdue University](#), creating a beautiful lawn does require some work.



CAPTION By Victoria Caceres

- The researchers compared four lawn-care strategies –
- Doing nothing (they called this 'no-input')
  - Using typical garden center synthetic pesticides and fertilizers
  - [Integrated Pest Management](#) (using techniques such as de-mulching, aerating, bringing in beneficial bugs and applying pesticides as a last resort.)
  - Organic (organic fertilizers, approved organic pest control methods.)


What they found was somewhat surprising, at least to those whose idea of lawn care revolves around a lawnmower and a

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spray bottle of [Roundup](#).

The highest ratings, meaning "significantly improved visual appearance" compared to doing nothing at all, came from using either a program of integrated pest management or common lawn care products.

Which didn't mean that organic didn't work. In fact, the natural organic program produced lawns of similar quality on the majority of rating dates, it just wasn't quite as nice as the other two.

Their findings are in a recent issue of the journal [HortTechnology](#), a publication of the [American Society for Horticultural Science](#).

And actually, "the no-input program also resulted in canopy greenness levels similar to or significantly greater than those provided by the Integrated pest Management Program and Consumer Program on most dates," Purdue entomologist [Victoria Caceres](#), one of the paper's authors, said in a release.

In terms of cost, doing nothing was cheapest, followed by integrated pest management.

The moral of this story is that those seeking lovely lawns might have more choices than they realize, the researchers say in their paper.

"The results highlight how incorporation of scouting into different fertility and pesticide programs may provide short-term economic benefits without any significant aesthetic impacts."



CAPTION

By Elizabeth Weise

By Elizabeth Weise

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# HARVARD

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## When Grass Isn't Greener

### Explorations

### Alternatives to the "perfect" lawn, at home and at Harvard

*Nell Porter Brown* <sup>[4]</sup>

Faced with large, unhealthy pine trees that grew too close to their home and had to come down, Hillary Wyon, A.L.M. '08, and her neighbors joined forces to redesign their abutting yards—nixing the ubiquitous suburban lawn. “The people who lived here before us had the perfect lawn; they were very much the Roundup mentality,” says Wyon, who lives in Belmont, Massachusetts. “But we wanted to be chemical-free because it’s better for our pets and vegetable gardens. And watering lawns is such a waste.”

Wyon and her partner, Paul Williamson, had researched indigenous drought-tolerant grasses and ground covers, along with moss lawns. In the end they planted a combination of chamomile, thyme, and mint. “It’s really soft, low-growing greenery,” Wyon notes. “And when you walk on it, the leaves get crushed and produce fragrance.”

The two couples also added to the existing low- and high-bush blueberries and raspberries, and put in serviceberry and chokeberry trees, which birds love. On their part of the property, Wyon ripped up most of the rest of the turf in front and on the side and put in two raised-bed vegetable gardens. She plans to do the same in the backyard, using marigolds and other natural deterrents to animal cohabitants like rabbits, skunks, and squirrels. “I don’t like dandelions as much as anyone,” Wyon explains, “but getting rid of them is not worth pouring chemicals on the land that get into the air and the water and the environment.”

Botanist Peter Del Tredici, senior research scientist at the Arnold Arboretum, notes that Americans’ “ideal lawn”—that shimmering expanse of velvety emerald softness first manifest around English manor homes in the beginning of the 1700s—is, in fact, an artificially enhanced monoculture. It is a purely cosmetic landscape that “goes against the more heterogeneous natural landscape and requires tons of fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides, gasoline for mowing, and water, to be maintained,” says Del Tredici. “Which is horrifying.”

Think of the scale. Of the 116 million American households, only about 25 percent do not have yards or grass to take care of, says Bruce Butterfield, senior researcher for the National Gardening Association in Burlington, Vermont. If the typical suburban lawn is 5,000 square feet, he says, that translates into a *huge* portion of the American landscape, even if most are individual “postage-stamp-sized” yards. According to an analysis of NASA satellite data, turf covers about 49,421 square miles of American land—representing three times more acreage in the nation than irrigated corn.

Think of the money. In 2009, individuals spent about \$20 billion on lawn care in the United States—which is only a fraction of what the industrial, athletic, and other commercial entities spend on perfecting *their* turf, he adds. Why? “Lawns are often about self-image; the identity with a manicured lawn suggests higher status,” Butterfield asserts. “People think of golf courses and country clubs and mansions. The big fertilizer companies really play into this with their commercials. The message is: If you have dandelions in your lawn, you’re a bad person; you’re lazy and you’re an eyesore in the neighborhood and you should be ashamed of yourself.”



Lawns have been around in America in some form since the turn of the eighteenth century, although they were minimal and there to feed (and were maintained by) grazing animals. Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, among other well-off landowners, were influenced by the majestic grounds of contemporary English gentry and aspects of those landscapes, including lawns, turned up on their own estates.

Grass, which grew much more easily in England, was critical to animal husbandry. “During the eighteenth century, European pasture plants including timothy and fowl-meadow grass and the legumes red clover and alfalfa were common as pasture grasses throughout the colonies,” according to *Redesigning the American Lawn: A Search for Environmental Harmony*, by F. Herbert Bormann, Diana Balmori, and Gordon T. Geballe. Native New England grasses were not as easily grown or digestible by livestock, so seed combinations were often imported from England. With the coming of the Industrial Revolution, newly middle-class families who could afford to move out of the cities, and detached housing soon prevailed, preferably surrounded by a green yard, which the owners believed created “reservoirs of clean air and healthy home environments.”

The lawn, carrying the English connotations of nature with it, became a symbol of prestige in nineteenth-century suburbs. Similarly, centers of towns in New England, the old “commons,” which had been the setting for such useful activities as rope-making, hay-growing, military drills, and town fairs of the eighteenth century, were transformed from bare stamped earth, cultivated fields, or cemetery grounds into lawned and treed parks, now called “greens.”

In her 2008 *New Yorker* article, “Turf War,” Elizabeth Kolbert credits Andrew Jackson Downing, a nursery owner, with publishing the first landscape gardening book for Americans in 1841, encouraging people to beautify their front yards through careful plantings and sculpting of the landscape—ideas that influenced Frederick Law Olmsted’s grand lawns of Central Park, as well as planned suburban communities like Riverside, Illinois. The prevalence of the more expansive, individually mowed lawn appeared in the later nineteenth century (the first push mower became available in 1870), along with the burgeoning American suburb.

The Garden Club of America, founded in 1913, also promoted tidy personal lawns and yards, running contests and publicity drives to promote “a plot with a single type of grass with no intruding weeds, kept mown at a height of an inch and a half, uniformly green, and neatly edged,” reports Virginia Scott Jenkins in *The Lawn: A History of an American Obsession*. Also significant, Peter Del Tredici points out, was the collaborative research venture between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Golf Association that resulted, by 1930, in feasible combinations of lawn grasses that would grow well in a variety of American climates. The marketing of herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers came later, sometimes in conjunction with chemical research associated with World War II.

Anti-lawn sentiment has been building during the last two decades, however, given the climate crisis. Motivated by books like *Redesigning the American Lawn* and Sally and Andy Wasowski’s *The Landscaping Revolution: Garden with Mother Nature, Not Against Her*—and by research on the effects of petrochemicals on drinking water and air quality—many people are calling for a radical rethinking of our entrenched aesthetic views. “The big thing,” maintains Del Tredici, author of *Wild Urban Plants of the Northeast*, “is to get people to stop thinking that the turf has to be made up of one species of grass.”

He would argue that there is no true functional, natural, vegetative substitute for the “soft carpet” of a well-maintained lawn: “Ground covers and meadows do not fit in that category.” Instead, he favors the “freedom lawn” concept discussed in *Redesigning the American Lawn*. That calls for a green expanse composed of a community of plants that “sort themselves out according to the topographical gradient that is most peoples’ lawns,” he explains. There are varying soil conditions, and spots that are sunnier or shadier, or wetter or drier, areas closer to trees and other root systems, et cetera. The freedom lawn is not all grass, or even one kind of grass: it has dandelions, clover, and buttercups, too. “You can plant crocus and violets and ajuga. You can still walk on it and let them spread on their own with minimal mowing and no petrochemicals,” Del Tredici points out. “Before herbicides were invented and promoted, people accepted dandelions and clover and other flowers as the inevitable reality they are.” The problem is not the lawn, per se, he emphasizes, but all the petrochemicals and water used to keep it green and weed-free.

Bruce Butterfield also sees this centrist approach to lawns as constructive. “To me, there is a continuum from a highly manicured ‘golf course’ lawn to one that is not cared for at all,” he says. He recommends Cornell University’s website, [www.gardening.cornell.edu/lawn/index.html](http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/lawn/index.html) [12], for its reasonable guidance on lawn care. Butterfield himself lives on 150 acres in northern Vermont, having moved from Burlington “because it was beginning to look like New Jersey.” He keeps about three acres of lawn mowed and uses no chemicals. “The primary question is, ‘How do we approach this in a balanced way so our landscape looks good and is good for the plants and earthworms and animals and people?’” he adds. “Because for many people in America, it’s not a choice whether they’re going to have lawn. It’s ‘How are we going to manage it?’”

Harvard University faces this very question when confronting its 80 acres of turf in Cambridge. Landscape manager Wayne P. Carbone has overseen a significant change in lawn care practices since 2007, when a test patch in the Yard showed that organic techniques produced better results in terms of soil improvements and enhanced microbial activity. That, in turn, generated turf that was healthier and had a deeper root system because it was less dependent on fertilizer and irrigation. “It really opened my eyes,” says Carbone, who had been schooled in and practiced conventional, synthetic, chemical landscape maintenance for more than two decades. “At home now I use compost ‘teas’ and have eliminated synthetic fertilizers.”

Most people do not understand what cool-weather grass needs to grow healthily, says the Arnold Arboretum’s manager of horticulture, Steve Schneider, A.L.M. ’10. By using too much fertilizer and water, and mowing the turf too often, Schneider says, they hurt root development—and shallower, weaker roots are more vulnerable to pests and invasive species and cannot winter over properly. “When people think their lawns don’t look good, it’s often not because of grubs or insects or weeds, it’s because of poor watering and mowing practices,” he reports. “But people don’t realize this, and tend to water more and fertilize more. And they don’t really think about what that means: chemicals leaching off into the water supply and bacterial ‘blooms’ that kill fish. Ultimately, this leads to polluting our resources. It’s a vicious cycle all because people want lawns—which are not necessary.”

Carbone has found that alternative organic practices—focused on soils management, moisture retention, aeration, composting, and optimizing nitrogen and nutrient cycling through microbes and fungi—have not only enabled his crews to give up synthetic chemicals, but have also significantly reduced mowing and irrigation rates. “The grass is not growing as vigorously as it did when you’re applying 36 percent nitrogen fertilizer on top of it. And our water use is down by about three million gallons in Harvard Yard,” he reports. “We now take all the yard waste to the Arnold Arboretum and compost it with different recipes, depending on what we want to do with the soil.” (The crews use only nominal amounts of coffee and vegetable waste from the dining halls for composting; much of that uneaten food is trucked to a pig farm. To read more about Harvard’s program, visit [www.uos.harvard.edu/fmo/landscape/organiclandscaping](http://www.uos.harvard.edu/fmo/landscape/organiclandscaping) [13].)

The Arboretum has minimal manicured grassy areas, which are mown but not fertilized. But arboretums and botanical gardens have more leeway for experimentation and “messy” landscapes than do corporate headquarters, golf courses, and universities, where expectations about containing nature run high. “It’s a lot easier to run a mower over a surface and be done with it than manage a water garden or perennials or even a wildflower meadow,” Schneider says, especially “when you’re dealing with stakeholders who are walking by the site and don’t know it’s supposed to be an educational experiment, or an environmentally friendly lawn, and start screaming that ‘Someone hasn’t mown the lawn!’ Changing ideas about the perfect lawn is really about re-educating people to think in a completely different way.”

Most of the grounds surrounding the Arboretum’s new Weld Hill research facility consist of a new “metropolitan meadow mix” that includes various grasses and hardy wildflowers. Schneider says that it can be planted on any scale, “but would Harvard Yard buy into it? Probably not, because in that setting it could look ‘unkempt’ because, psychologically, people still expect to see green grass.”

A more sustainable alternative to the usual lawn has been installed outside Harvard’s LEED-certified 46 Blackstone Street building in Cambridge. The space is hilly and contains various fescues—hay-like grasses—that are low-mow (three times a year) and drought-resistant. But the new look has taken some getting used to; not everyone adores the less controlled look, or the ryegrasses that were also planted initially and grew two to three feet high. “It could look like a hayfield, and people joked that I should get some goats out there,” Carbone reports.

Meanwhile, with the lawn mostly gone from the front of her house, Hillary Wyon says her goals—“to not use so much water, use indigenous plants or those that grow easily here, and plant more fruits and vegetables”—are being met. “There are a lot of alternatives,” she adds, “for having a nice green space that is more natural than a lawn.”

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<http://harvardmagazine.com/2011/03/when-grass-isnt-greener>



# Healthy Lawns For a Healthier Nova Scotia

by: [Environment](#) | Mar 22nd, 2011

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A social media version of this release with hi-res downloadable photos and videos will be available later today, March 22, at <http://gov.ns.ca/news/smr/2011-03-22-Healthy-Lawns/> .

Nova Scotians will get help making the move to natural lawn and landscaping practices with the Healthy Lawns education campaign announced today, March 22.

“We are helping to protect public health and the environment by limiting exposure to pesticides,” said Environment Minister, Sterling Belliveau. “This education campaign will provide Nova Scotians with healthy lawn-care alternatives.”

The Healthy Lawns campaign promotes natural lawn care and alternatives to pesticides, and raises awareness about new legislation and regulations.

The campaign includes an information pamphlet that will be distributed across the province, a toll-free information line, website information, and displays at public events, such as home and garden shows. The Department of Environment is also collaborating with environmental organizations to help get information to the public.

Gardening and landscaping practices that do not require pesticides include manually removing weeds, over-seeding, fertilizing, reducing lawn size by increasing other plant types and enjoying wild flowers.

“The landscape industry supports efforts to educate Nova Scotians on how to maintain healthy lawns,” said David Thompson, chair of the environment committee of Landscape Nova Scotia. “Our industry and clients want to maintain healthy landscapes in an environmentally sustainable manner that does not create unacceptable health risks, and this initiative supports that goal.”

The Healthy Lawns campaign follows legislation and regulations restricting non-essential pesticides in Nova Scotia. The Non-Essential Pesticides Control Act was passed in May 2010 and the Exceptions to Prohibitions on Non-Essential Pesticides Regulations were passed in December.

The legislation and regulations apply to lawn care and ornamental plants on residential, commercial, government and institutional properties (such as hospitals, long-terms care facilities, schools), parks, and other recreational facilities.

Forestry activities, agricultural activities (including private vegetable and fruit gardens), and golf courses are exempt.

The regulations are accompanied by a List of Allowable Pesticides, considered

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to pose a reduced risk to humans and the environment.

The sale and use of pesticides not on the allowable list will be prohibited on lawns as of April 1. The legislation will extend to ornamental shrubs, flowers and trees April 1, 2012.

For more information on pesticide legislation, regulations, the List of Allowable Pesticides and the Healthy Lawns campaign, visit [www.gov.ns.ca/nse/pests/non-essential.pesticides.asp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/pests/non-essential.pesticides.asp) . There is also a direct link at [www.gov.ns.ca/nse](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse) and the toll-free information line is 1-855-455-4034.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

Nova Scotians will get help making the move to natural lawn and landscaping practices with the Healthy Lawns education campaign announced today (March 22nd).

The campaign promotes natural lawn care and alternatives to pesticides, and raises awareness about new pesticides legislation and regulations passed last year.

Environment Minister Sterling Belliveau says the department is helping to protect public health and the environment by limiting pesticide exposure.

Nova Scotians can find information at [w-w-w dot gov n-s dot c-a slash n-s-e](http://www.gov.ns.ca) or by phoning 1-855-455-4034.

-30-

Media Contact: Jodi Sibley  
Department of Environment  
902-424-7420  
Cell: 902-430-6599  
E-mail: [sibleyjm@gov.ns.ca](mailto:sibleyjm@gov.ns.ca)

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Cape Delegation members sponsor vegetation management legislation

03/02/11 · 12:18 pm :: posted by editor  ShareThis

Concern over proposed herbicide spraying by NStar prompts filing of legislation

Cape Republicans, Democrats, join together to protect the Cape's water

Following Cape-wide concern over NStar's proposed use of herbicides to control vegetation along the rights of way from one end of Cape Cod to the other, State Representatives Cleon H. Turner (D-Dennis), Sarah K. Peake (D-Provincetown), and Timothy Madden (D-Nantucket) filed legislation that would require any public utility proposing to use herbicides to control vegetation on rights of way to negotiate with any municipality that desires to eliminate the use of herbicides on the right of way.

Massachusetts House Docket 3587, which mirrors a Maine statute that amended the Maine Pesticide Control Act of 1975, states that a community can initiate negotiations with the public utility for mechanical removal of offending vegetation in that community rather than use chemicals. The legislation requires negotiations in good faith and arbitration in cases where parties are deadlocked or promises agreed to are not kept by one side or the other.

A potential negotiated agreement would be that the community would arrange for the work to be done and NStar would contribute at least the amount of money they would have spent using chemicals. Another possibility would be that NStar and the community would share both work and financial responsibilities. Though that could mean that the community might bear some additional expense, it would also mean that the groundwater would be better protected by lessening the amount of chemicals sprayed over the Cape's single source aquifer.

"Clearly, such negotiations and agreements will require municipalities to step up and undertake some part of the cost or some part of the physical labor to mechanically remove vegetation from the rights of way, said Representative Turner. Turner also stated that "Cape towns and residents need to have much more serious discussions regarding eliminating the use of chemicals that have the potential of contaminating our drinking water. Our hope has been that NStar would respect the sensitivity of the Cape Cod environment and not use chemicals."

Representative Sarah Peake, an original sponsor of the bill said, "This bill is all about local control. It strengthens the hand of every town on the Cape. I have been very frustrated that decisions regarding the use of herbicides rest almost exclusively with state and federal agencies. This bill will give our Boards of Selectmen and Town Councilors negotiating power and the ability to say 'no' to herbicides."

The proposed legislation includes an arbitration clause that will ensure all parties negotiate in good faith. Senator Dan Wolf (D-Harwich), Representative Susan Gifford (R-Wareham), Representative David Vieira (R-

"Cape Cod is all about water. Using it, sharing it, and protecting it. This helps make sure we protect the water we need in the best possible way now and in the future." - Representative Demetrius Atsalis (D – Barnstable)



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Falmouth), Representative Randy Hunt (R-Sandwich) and Representative Demetrius Atsalis (D-Barnstable) have also lent their support to the legislation.

Courtesy of Representative Turner's office.



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Op-Ed

## No seeds, no independent research

**Companies that genetically engineer crops have a lock on what we know about their safety and benefits.**

By Doug Gurian-Sherman

February 13, 2011

Soybeans, corn, cotton and canola — most of the acres planted in these crops in the United States are genetically altered. "Transgenic" seeds can save farmers time and reduce the use of some insecticides, but herbicide use is higher, and respected experts argue that some genetically engineered crops may also pose serious health and environmental risks. Also, the benefits of genetically engineered crops may be overstated.

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### FOR THE RECORD:

Seeds: In a Feb. 13 Op-Ed about seed-company barriers to independent research on genetically modified crops, the owner of the seed company Pioneer was incorrectly identified as Dow Chemical. DuPont owns Pioneer.

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We don't have the complete picture. That's no accident. Multibillion-dollar agricultural corporations, including Monsanto and Syngenta, have restricted independent research on their genetically engineered crops. They have often refused to provide independent scientists with seeds, or they've set restrictive conditions that severely limit research options.

This is legal. Under U.S. law, genetically engineered crops are patentable inventions. Companies have broad power over the use of any patented product, including who can study it and how.

Agricultural companies defend their stonewalling by saying that unrestricted research could make them vulnerable to lawsuits if an experiment somehow leads to harm, or that it could give competitors unfair insight into their products. But it's likely that the companies fear something else too: An experiment could reveal that a genetically engineered product is hazardous or doesn't perform as well as promised.

Whatever the reasons, the results are clear: Public sector research has been blocked. In 2009, 26 university entomologists — bug scientists — wrote a letter to the Environmental Protection Agency protesting restricted access to seeds. The letter went public, but not most of the writers' identities. They were afraid of retaliation from the companies that might further hamper their research.



"No truly independent research can be legally conducted on many critical questions involving these crops," they wrote. Christian Krupke, a Purdue University entomologist who signed the letter, put it more succinctly to a reporter for a scientific journal. "Industry is completely driving the bus," he said.

Beyond patent law, agricultural companies hold a pocketbook advantage in terms of research. For example, they fund much of the agricultural safety research done in this country. And when deciding whether to allow a genetically engineered crop onto the market, the Department of Agriculture and other regulatory agencies do not perform their own experiments on the performance and safety of the product; instead, they rely largely on studies submitted by the companies themselves.

The dangers ought to be clear. In 2001, the seed company Pioneer, owned by Dow Chemical, was developing a strain of genetically engineered corn that contained a toxin to help it resist corn rootworm, an insect pest. A group of university scientists, working at Pioneer's request, found that the corn also appeared to kill a species of beneficial ladybug, which indicated that other helpful insects might also be harmed. But, according to a report in the journal *Nature Biotechnology*, Dow said its own research showed no ladybug problems, and it prohibited the scientists from making the research public. Nor was it submitted to the EPA. In 2003, the EPA approved a version of the corn, known as Herculex.

Now, we may find out who was right in the field, possibly at the expense of a beneficial bug.

Research restrictions also hamper scientists' ability to assess how genetically engineered crops perform against other modified crops, traditional crops, approaches such as organic farming and the seed companies' promises. There's reason to be suspicious. Using USDA and peer-reviewed data, the Union of Concerned Scientists analyzed corn and soybean yields since new seeds were introduced. We found increases due to genetically engineered traits that were marginal — not a result promoted by the industry.

Arkansas and West Virginia are suing Monsanto to pursue similar research, trying to force the company to release data on its transgenic soybeans, which officials in these states suspect aren't as productive as cheaper alternatives.

Monsanto, in its defense, will point to an agreement with the USDA that gives the agency's agricultural scientists access to its genetically engineered seeds for a wide range of research, and the company has also had limited agreements with some universities. Several other seed companies are said to be negotiating voluntary deals with universities in the wake of the entomologists' letter to the EPA, and the American Seed Trade Assn., a trade group, is also developing guidelines to improve access to the new seeds.

These are positive steps, but they don't go far enough. For one thing, the deals and the trade association rules are not binding. The companies can back out of them. They are also opaque; the public really has no idea how far these deals go or how common they are. And what about scientists at the universities and research institutions that aren't party to one of the voluntary agreements? They're still out in the cold.

Moreover, few if any of the agreements guarantee opportunities for every kind of independent research. The Monsanto agreement with the USDA covers research into crop production practices, for example, not research into issues such as the health effects of genetically engineered crops.

This is not how science should operate. Agricultural companies are still the gatekeepers, choosing who gets to do research and what topics are studied. To ensure that agricultural science serves the public, Congress should change patent law and create a clear exemption for agricultural research.

The need for this exemption will only increase. As the technology spreads, it's likely that more, and more complex, genetic traits will be introduced in more crops. As a result, future genetically engineered crops could pose even more risks than current ones. Without robust independent analysis, it will be impossible to adequately assess these potential pitfalls.

The companies that produce the seeds claim that genetically engineered crops are safe and are better than traditional

crops in a range of ways. It's time for these companies to back up their rhetoric. The only way to test their grand assertions is to let independent science take its course.

*Doug Gurian-Sherman is a plant pathologist and senior scientist at the Union of Concerned Scientists in Washington.*

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## In poison emergencies, who'll answer your call?

**(CNN)** -- Congress might cut most of the federal funding for your local poison control center, which could mean a longer wait during your next poison-related emergency.

Measure H.R. 1 would cut \$27.3 million, or about 93%, of federal funding for poison control centers across the United States. The bill was passed by the House of Representatives, but rejected by the Senate on March 9. Congressional leaders now need to negotiate a final spending measure, and that bill might include cuts to the poison control centers.

"My feeling is that just based on my experience, it would end up costing lives somewhere along the way," says Jo Anne Bryant, a nurse with 30 years experience who recently called a poison center when her husband, Ronald, accidentally inhaled pesticide fumes while cleaning out the garage. "I've dealt with some emergencies in this field over my career, but I was completely at a loss as to what to do. When it came to this, I felt completely helpless."

Bryant dialed the national poison center hot line 1-800-222-1222 and was told to take her husband to the hospital if he had specific symptoms, including vomiting. He'd already thrown up, so they headed to the emergency department, where he was treated and released.

### It's not just the patients

Hospitals rely on poison control centers, too.

Poison centers answered 4.2 million calls in 2009, and about 16% of those calls came from hospitals seeking their expertise.

"After the hospital did their initial treatment," says Bryant, "they also called the poison control center to verify that they had administered the correct treatment."

What about when you dial 911? They call your poison center, too. When the 911 operators figure out your emergency is poisoning related, they conference in the poison center for a three-way conversation.

That's because the poison center staff answering phone calls include nurses, physicians and pharmacists with specialized poison center training, and there is always a toxicologist on call.

"If we're not around, you better tell your 911 operator to strap their belts on to answer a whole lot of calls that they don't know a damn thing about and can't safely manage that patient at home," says Mark Ryan, director of the Louisiana Poison Center.

### Spending here, saving there

Poison control center operators say their services save health care dollars, primarily because most callers are told they don't need a hospital. Eliminating call centers could increase unnecessary trips to the hospital, further burdening the health care system, they say.

"Poison centers treat nearly 75% of all exposure cases at home, without the patient having to go to a health care facility," said Jim Hirt, executive director of the American Association of Poison Control Centers, in a written statement. "The costs of this cut would ultimately far exceed the \$27 million saved."

According to a study cited by the Department of Health and Human Services, for every dollar spent on poison control centers, \$7 in health care spending is saved. Other studies find the per dollar value of poison control centers to be far greater.

Louisiana has already been down this road. Because of state budget cuts, the Louisiana Poison Center closed on October 31, 1988.

The percentage of patients treated at home dropped to 28.6%, from 74.1% before the center closed, according to a 1991 study published in the Southern Medical Journal.

The Louisiana Poison Center reopened in 1992, because the additional health care costs outweighed the savings, and because of stories like

Peggy Toner's.

Toner's 2-year-old daughter swallowed an antibiotic cream one day in 1990. With the Louisiana Poison Center closed, she called another state's poison center for help, but the staff was instructed not to help her, because the state where she lived, Louisiana, was not paying for their poison center services.

"It was the most horrible feeling in the world," says Toner. "What if my daughter died because they wouldn't help me?"

She then called a Kentucky poison center, where she got help.

### **Creating one national call center**

The cuts in federal funding would eliminate all but one of the nation's 57 poison control centers, which rely heavily on federal funding.

[Click here to see how many federal dollars your local poison control center receives.](#)

"There's just no reason to maintain 57 separate call centers around the country when technology would enable us to get the job done with one," said a statement from Rep. Denny Rehberg, R-Montana, chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee for Health and Human Services. "We can save millions simply by cutting out 56 duplicative locations and with record debt and deficits putting our future in jeopardy, it's worth looking under every rock for savings."

Poison control center operators strongly disagree.

"Local relationships are invaluable" says Ryan of Louisiana. "There's no way a single center could get in there and provide for the wants and needs of every state. It's not possible."

He also warns of putting all resources in a single entity.

"What happens if the hypothetical 'single' center gets wiped out by a tornado and the infrastructure is destroyed? Where are those 12,000+ calls each day going to go?"

Many health care students -- doctors, nurses, pharmacists, EMTs -- receive formal toxicology training from their local center. "Who else knows what we know?" says Ryan.

It is unclear how one enormous center would be funded, or in which state it would be.

"If you want the same number of people to be answered," says Gaylord Lopez, director of the Georgia Poison Center, "suddenly you need to have probably six- or seven-hundred people working in a single poison control center."

Proponents of the one-center plan cite innovation in private business and say government could follow the example to be more efficient.

"If you look at things like bookstores or movie rental stores, with internet technology, where long distances really aren't an issue anymore, what they do is they save a ton of money by putting everything in a single warehouse," said one congressional staffer speaking anonymously.

### **Could it work?**

Many call centers already serve areas far beyond their locale.

A call center in Nebraska also handles emergencies in American Samoa and Micronesia. Oregon serves Guam. A Jacksonville, Florida, call center serves the Virgin Islands. And Montana -- Rehberg's state -- is served by the Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center, which also handles Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho and Nevada, negotiating rates with each state.

Cell phones also make out-of-state poison emergencies a common thing.

Timing the announcement with National Poison Prevention Week, which began Sunday, the American Association of Poison Control Centers will release an iPhone app to help users dial the poison control hot line. Those calls, like all cell phone calls, may ring at the nearest poison control center, or not.

"Every single center gets calls from other states almost daily," says Ryan. "Two or three a day; we see it more with certain carriers than others."

Still, poison center operators insist that local matters.

"I think it was just an ill-informed decision by somebody who, let's just hope, was new on the scene," says Lopez about the proposed budget cuts, "and wasn't that ill-informed after lots of experience."

### **Find this article at:**

<http://www.cnn.com/2011/HEALTH/03/22/poison.control.risk.closure>





U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

# NIH News

## National Institutes of Health

[National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences](#)  
(NIEHS)

For Immediate Release  
Friday, February 11, 2011

Contact:

[Robin Arnette](#), NIEHS 919-541-5143

### NIH study finds two pesticides associated with Parkinson's disease

New research shows a link between use of two pesticides, rotenone and paraquat, and Parkinson's disease. People who used either pesticide developed Parkinson's disease approximately 2.5 times more often than non-users.

The study was a collaborative effort conducted by researchers at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), which is part of the National Institutes of Health, and the Parkinson's Institute and Clinical Center in Sunnyvale, Calif.

"Rotenone directly inhibits the function of the mitochondria, the structure responsible for making energy in the cell," said Freya Kamel, Ph.D., a researcher in the intramural program at NIEHS and co-author of the paper appearing online in the journal *Environmental Health Perspectives*. "Paraquat increases production of certain oxygen derivatives that may harm cellular structures. People who used these pesticides or others with a similar mechanism of action were more likely to develop Parkinson's disease."

The authors studied 110 people with Parkinson's disease and 358 matched controls from the Farming and Movement Evaluation (FAME) Study (<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/atniehs/labs/epi/studies/fame/index.cfm>) to investigate the relationship between Parkinson's disease and exposure to pesticides or other agents that are toxic to nervous tissue. FAME is a case-control study that is part of the larger Agricultural Health Study (<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/atniehs/labs/epi/studies/ahs/index.cfm>), a study of farming and health in approximately 90,000 licensed pesticide applicators and their spouses. The investigators diagnosed Parkinson's disease by agreement of movement disorder specialists and assessed the lifelong use of pesticides using detailed interviews.

There are no home garden or residential uses for either paraquat or rotenone currently registered. Paraquat use has long been restricted to certified applicators, largely due to concerns based on studies of animal models of Parkinson's disease. Use of rotenone as a pesticide to kill invasive fish species is currently the only allowable use of this pesticide.

"These findings help us to understand the biologic changes underlying Parkinson's disease. This may have important implications for the treatment and ultimately the prevention of Parkinson's disease," said Caroline Tanner, M.D., Ph.D., clinical research director of the Parkinson's Institute and Clinical Center, and lead author of the article.

The NIEHS supports research to understand the effects of the environment on human health and is part of NIH. For more information on environmental health topics, visit [www.niehs.nih.gov](http://www.niehs.nih.gov). Subscribe to one or more of the NIEHS news lists ([www.niehs.nih.gov/news/releases/newslist/index.cfm](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/releases/newslist/index.cfm)) to stay current on NIEHS news, press releases, grant opportunities, training, events, and publications.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) — *The Nation's Medical Research Agency* — includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the primary federal agency for conducting and supporting basic, clinical and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov).

**Reference:** Tanner CM, Kamel F, Ross GW, Hoppin JA, Goldman SM, Korell M, Marras C, Bhudhikanok GS, Kasten M, Chade AR, Comyns K, Richards MB, Meng C, Priestly B, Fernandez HH, Cambi F, Umbach DM, Blair A, Sandler DP, Langston JW. 2011. Rotenone, paraquat and Parkinson's disease. *Environ Health Perspect*; doi:10.1289/ehp.1002839 [Online 26 January 2011].



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# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PERSPECTIVES

## Widely Used Pesticides with Previously Unknown Endocrine Activity Revealed as *in Vitro* Anti-Androgens

Frances Orton, Erika Rosivatz,  
Martin Scholze, and Andreas Kortenkamp

doi: 10.1289/ehp.1002895 (available at <http://dx.doi.org/>)  
Online 10 February 2011



**NIEHS**

National Institute of  
Environmental Health Sciences

National Institutes of Health  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## Abstract

**Background:** Evidence suggests that there is widespread decline in male reproductive health and anti-androgenic pollutants may play a significant role. There is also a clear disparity between pesticide exposure and endocrine disrupting data, with the majority of the published literature focused on pesticides that are no longer registered for use in developed countries.

**Objective:** The aim of this study was to utilise estimated human exposure data to select pesticides to test for anti-androgenic activity, focusing on highest use pesticides.

**Methods:** We used European databases to select 134 candidate pesticides based on highest exposure, followed by a filtering step according to known or predicted receptor mediated anti-androgenic potency, based on a previously published quantitative structure-activity relationship (QSAR) model. In total, 37 pesticides were tested for *in vitro* androgen receptor (AR) antagonism. Of these, 14 were previously reported to be AR antagonists (“active”), 4 were predicted AR antagonists using the QSAR, 6 were predicted to not be AR antagonists (“inactive”), and 13 with unknown activity, which were “out of domain” and therefore could not be classified with the QSAR (“unknown”).

**Results:** All 14 pesticides with previous evidence of AR antagonism were confirmed as anti-androgenic in our assay and 9 previously untested pesticides were identified as anti-androgenic (dimethomorph, fenhexamid, quinoxifen, cyprodinil,  $\lambda$ -cyhalothrin, pyrimethanil, fludioxonil, azinphos-methyl, pirimiphos-methyl). In addition, 7 compounds were classified as androgenic.

**Conclusions:** Due to estimated anti-androgenic potency, current use, estimated exposure, and lack of previous data, we strongly recommend that dimethomorph, fludioxonil, fenhexamid, imazalil, *ortho*-phenylphenol and pirimiphos-methyl be tested for anti-androgenic effects *in vivo*. The lack of human biomonitoring data for environmentally relevant pesticides presents a barrier to current risk assessment of pesticides on humans.

# Decline of honey bees now a global phenomenon, says United Nations

By Michael McCarthy, Environment Editor

*Thursday, 10 March 2011*

The mysterious collapse of honey-bee colonies is becoming a global phenomenon, scientists working for the United Nations have revealed.

Declines in managed bee colonies, seen increasingly in Europe and the US in the past decade, are also now being observed in China and Japan and there are the first signs of African collapses from Egypt, according to the report from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The authors, who include some of the world's leading honey-bee experts, issue a stark warning about the disappearance of bees, which are increasingly important as crop pollinators around the globe. Without profound changes to the way human beings manage the planet, they say, declines in pollinators needed to feed a growing global population are likely to continue. The scientists warn that a number of factors may now be coming together to hit bee colonies around the world, ranging from declines in flowering plants and the use of damaging insecticides, to the worldwide spread of pests and air pollution. They call for farmers and landowners to be offered incentives to restore pollinator-friendly habitats, including key flowering plants near crop-producing fields and stress that more care needs to be taken in the choice, timing and application of insecticides and other chemicals. While managed hives can be moved out of harm's way, "wild populations (of pollinators) are completely vulnerable", says the report.

"The way humanity manages or mismanages its nature-based assets, including pollinators, will in part define our collective future in the 21st century," said Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director.

"The fact is that of the 100 crop species that provide 90 per cent of the world's food, over 70 are pollinated by bees.

"Human beings have fabricated the illusion that in the 21st century they have the technological prowess to be independent of nature.

"Bees underline the reality that we are more, not less, dependent on nature's services in a world of close to seven billion people."

Declines in bee colonies date back to the mid 1960s in Europe, but have accelerated since 1998, while in North America, losses of colonies since 2004 have left the continent with fewer managed pollinators than at any time in the past 50 years, says the report.

Now Chinese beekeepers have recently "faced several inexplicable and complex symptoms of colony losses in both species", the report says. And it has been reported elsewhere that some Chinese farmers have had to resort to pollinating fruit trees by hand because of the lack of insects.

Furthermore, a quarter of beekeepers in Japan "have recently been confronted with sudden losses of their bee colonies", while in Africa, beekeepers along the Egyptian Nile have been reporting signs of "colony collapse disorder" – although to date there are no other confirmed reports from the rest of the continent.



The report lists a number of factors which may be coming together to cause the decline and they include:

- \* Habitat degradation, including the loss of flowering plant species that provide food for bees;
- \* Some insecticides, including the so-called "systemic" insecticides which can migrate to the entire plant as it grows and be taken in by bees in nectar and pollen;
- \* Parasites and pests, such as the well-known Varroa mite;
- \* Air pollution, which may be interfering with the ability of bees to find flowering plants and thus food – scents that could travel more than 800 metres in the 1800s now reach less than 200 metres from a plant.

"The transformation of the countryside and rural areas in the past half-century or so has triggered a decline in wild-living bees and other pollinators," said one of the lead authors, Dr Peter Neumann of the Swiss Bee Research Centre.

"Society is increasingly investing in 'industrial-scale' hives and managed colonies to make up the shortfall and going so far as to truck bees around to farms and fields in order to maintain our food supplies.

"A variety of factors are making these man-made colonies vulnerable to decline and collapse. We need to get smarter about how we manage these hives, but perhaps more importantly, we need to better manage the landscape beyond, in order to recover wild bee populations."

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# Fresno Co. farmers push to halt new bike paths

Posted at 11:21 PM on Monday, Mar. 14, 2011

By Kurtis Alexander / The Fresno Bee

Pesticide spray and bicyclists don't mix well, and Fresno County farmers are taking steps to make sure the two don't mingle.

A coalition of growers is urging county leaders not to support new bike paths in heavily farmed areas. The push comes as the county looks to approve a long-term bike plan that includes routes between Fresno and Interstate 5 -- a connection many bicyclists see as vital but growers say could expose riders to risky farming practices, like spraying.

"There's no mistaking that we fully support developing bicycle trails ... [but] there can be potential for conflict," said Ryan Jacobsen, executive director of the Fresno County Farm Bureau. "If you're going to promote [bicycling], we think there are areas that would probably be more conducive than other areas."

Agricultural interests have the ear of county Supervisor Phil Larson, who has threatened to withhold support for the plan as it heads for a vote by the Board of Supervisors today.

"I'm not opposed to bicycle lanes in certain areas, but out in the ag sector, it's asking for unintended consequences," Larson said. "When a bicyclist is coming down a path and a little [pesticide] drift gets on them, they get all upset."

But bicycle advocates have their supporters, too, including Supervisor Susan Anderson: "You can't say people can't ride their bikes just because there's farming," she said.

Opposition to bike paths, say many in the bicycle community, is misguided. Regardless of whether bikeways are built in the rural areas, people are going to ride there, they say.

"It's just a matter of whether the county wants to make it safer for us" by building the paths, said Nick Paladino, a Fresno Cycling Club member and supporter of the county bike plan.

The Farm Bureau, joined by four other agriculture groups including the Nisei Farmers League and the Raisin Bargaining Association, called on county planners to reconsider bicycle routes proposed in such areas as Mendota and Huron and along the California Aqueduct.

While plans for these paths have not been finalized, nor is there adequate funding, the pending Regional Bicycle Master Plan lays the groundwork for moving forward.

Approval of the master plan is required to get local funds for bike paths under voter-approved Measure C and qualifies the county for additional state and federal dollars.

Future bike paths could take many forms, from a simple shoulder along existing roads to corridors built exclusively for bikes.

In January, the Planning Commission signed off on the proposed routes but with the caveat that growers be consulted before construction.

Jacobsen said he is supportive of the plan with this requirement.

Despite the debate, relatively little bicycling is done in farmlands west of Highway 99. And few if any bad experiences have been reported by riders navigating the back roads.

A state pesticide watchdog group cites a handful of occasions where pesticides have drifted to school bus stops, presenting a potential health risk for children. But the group lists no local incidents involving bicycles, nor does the county Agricultural Commissioner's Office, which tracks pesticide use.

Still, bicyclists cringe at the thought of being sprayed and note the occasional inconvenience of having to deal with the practice.

"When I'm out in those areas riding, I'm always having to watch for people spraying pesticides," said Fresno resident Stephen Lewis. "When that's happening, I stop, wait for the trucks to get out of the road and let the breeze carry it away."

In addition to drift, growers have expressed concerns about the potential for collisions between farm vehicles and bicycles.

County planners say even if the Regional Bicycle Master Plan is approved, it may be years before new bike paths are constructed west of Fresno. Scarce bicycle funds, they say, likely will be directed to more popular routes, like northeast of Fresno along Millerton Lake.

Still, as part of the regional plan, the county is looking broadly with the intention of linking most towns in the region.

"We have the same responsibilities to our small, unincorporated communities on the west side as we have elsewhere and we can't just ignore them," said Lynn Gorman, the county's deputy director of planning.

"This doesn't necessarily mean that I expect there to be a huge demand for bicyclists to get between Fresno and I-5 tomorrow, but we need to plan for connectivity."

# News briefs: Fresno County OKs bicycle master plan

Posted at 11:32 PM on Thursday, Mar. 17, 2011

The Fresno Bee

Fresno County supervisors this week approved the county's Regional Bicycle Master Plan.

The plan lays the groundwork for a network of bike routes across the county. Although little funding is available to build new bike routes, the plan qualifies the county for additional state and federal dollars.

Some growers have expressed reservations about the plan, fearing that new bike routes in heavily farmed areas will subject bicyclists to potentially harmful pesticide drift and agriculture traffic.

The plan approved by the Board of Supervisors includes provisions for farmers to be consulted when new rural paths are considered.

## Volunteers needed to help food drive

AARP and The Salvation Army are joining forces to find residents interested in volunteering for a spring food drive to help end hunger in the Fresno area.

An orientation session will be from 10 a.m. to noon March 26 at the Greater Fresno Chamber of Commerce, 2321 Fresno St., so residents can learn more about helping those struggling to make ends meet.

Details: (877) 926-8300.



## Scientists seeking emergency OK from EPA to use stink bug pesticide in orchards in 7 states

**By Associated Press, Friday, March 18, 6:55 PM**

EMMITSBURG, Md. — Apple and peach growers in seven states this year would be allowed to use an insecticide currently not permitted in orchards to fight crop damage from brown marmorated stink bugs, if scientists are able to win a federal emergency exemption by August.

If they succeed, fruit growers in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia could begin spraying with products containing dinotefuran before September and October, when extensive harm from the bugs is possible, said Virginia Tech. entomologist J. Christopher Bergh.

"With respect to that product, we do feel that it has a very good fit toward the end of the growing season," Bergh said during a panel discussion at Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg.

The meeting was organized by Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, R-Md., who called last summer for an aggressive federal response to swarms of the hardy, invasive Asian insects in his district and the region.

Bergh said he is preparing a petition to submit this spring to Virginia's agriculture department and the federal Environmental Protection Agency, which regulates pesticide use.

U.S. Agriculture Department scientists also are experimenting with scented traps and Asian wasps that prey on stink bugs, but both of those potential solutions are years away.

Dinotefuran is an ingredient in two commercial insecticides, Venom from Valent BioSciences Corp., a unit of Japan's Sumitomo Chemical Co. Ltd., and Scorpion from Gowan Co. LLC of Yuma, Ariz. The EPA currently allows its use on vegetables, grapes and cotton but it used in Japan and other Asian countries to control brown marmorated stink bugs on a wider variety of crops, including orchard fruits.

Bergh cautioned, though, that Japanese research about the compound's effectiveness in controlling stink bugs has not yet been translated or published. He also noted that Japanese regulators allow growers to use more of it than is currently allowed on U.S. field crops.

And although it is known to be effective against a broad spectrum of insects, including stink bugs, that attack certain U.S. field crops, it hasn't been tested in U.S. orchards, Bergh said.

Nevertheless, because of its known characteristics, there is a consensus among researchers that dinotefuran is the most suitable candidate for an emergency exemption, he said.

The EPA allows such exemptions to the permitted uses of a pesticide if it determines that an emergency condition exists. The exemption lasts no longer than one year but applicants can seek additional approvals.

Even if the emergency exemption is granted, dinotefuran is just part of a potential defense, Bergh said.

This year, five orchards in central and northern Virginia will also test the effectiveness of other, permitted insecticides on stink bugs, Bergh said.

And fruit growers in Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia will allow researchers to place traps baited with a stink bug attractant to monitor the numbers of insects throughout the growing season, said Tracy C. Leskey, a USDA research entomologist.

Scientists said the insects are in 33 states and spreading.

Last year, they damaged up to 50 percent of some late-season apples at Catoctin Mountain Orchard in Thurmont, said Robert Black, the company's president.

The bugs feed on the fruit, leaving dimples on the surface and larger, brown discoloration inside the fruit beneath the dimples.

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## FDNY Warns Don't Use Gasoline Products On Bedbugs

Queens fire officials last month issued a warning to borough residents to steer clear of gasoline or gasoline products to fight bedbug infestation at home.

FDNY officials said residents in Astoria have called 911 to report a gasoline odor coming from adjacent apartments in their buildings.

Firefighters responding to the calls discovered several incidents where residents poured gasoline on mattresses to kill bedbugs.

Allegedly a number of people, following dangerous, misleading advice had wiped gasoline on their own arms and their children's arms to stop the bedbugs from biting, officials said.

Such incidents involving the use of extremely flammable gasoline prompted FDNY officials to issue the warning about fatal consequences that could result from the misguided use of gasoline to battle bedbugs. "This is not the first time we have issued this warning," a fire spokesperson said. "We warn people over and over, just how dangerous it is to use gasoline or gasoline-based products in the home, but they don't listen."

Sources said, "Gasoline is a highly explosive compound that could ignite, pop and start a fatal blaze from something as simple as flicking a light switch."

Officials are urging Queens residents to seek help with bedbug infestation, instead of trying to clear infestations on their own. Residents are urged to call 311 to seek assistance from the New York City Department of Health. Residents should also notify superintendents, maintenance workers, landlords and/or building management for help with bedbug infestation.

—Liz Goff

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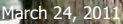
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## Benefits of rules still exceed costs across government – OMB report

Benefits of rules still exceed costs across government -- OMB report  
(03/04/2011)

Gabriel Nelson, E&E reporter

The benefits of federal regulations, including new rules issued last year by the Obama administration, have continued to outstrip the costs, according to a new analysis <[http://www.eenews.net/assets/2011/03/04/document\\_pm\\_01.pdf](http://www.eenews.net/assets/2011/03/04/document_pm_01.pdf)> by the White House Office of Management and Budget.

Major rules issued by executive branch agencies in 2010 will have \$23.3 billion to \$82.3 billion in annual benefits, compared with \$6.5 billion to \$12.5 billion in annual costs, according to the draft report released this week. Both figures are up from the rules issued in 2009, which will have an estimated \$8.6 billion to \$28.9 billion in annual benefits at a cost of \$3.7 billion to \$9.5 billion per year.

In total, federal regulations that were issued between 2000 and 2010 were estimated to provide an estimated \$136 billion to \$651 billion in benefits per year, with annual costs between \$44 billion and \$62 billion per year.

The report, which is compiled and submitted to Congress each year, is the latest to show that regulations are a net gain to society, though it is unlikely to satisfy critics of U.S. EPA and other agencies that create new rules for businesses.

Several conservative lawmakers have floated plans to slow down the pace of rulemaking, and next week, members of the House Judiciary Committee will mark up a bill from Rep. Geoff Davis (R-Ky.) that would require Congress to approve the most costly rules.

While debating federal spending on Capitol Hill this week, Democrats and the administration often pulled out these sorts of studies, hoping to deflect the criticism from Republicans who argue that red tape is a big reason for the economy's slow recovery.

Hoping to stave off deep budget cuts and other efforts to stop the agency from issuing or enforcing new rules, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and her congressional allies have frequently cited a new agency analysis that found Clean Air Act rules would provide almost \$2 trillion in net benefits in 2020 (Greenwire

Posted on 3/4/2011 (Archive on 3/25/2011)  
Posted by hspalding Contributed by

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## **Portland Kicks-off Composting Program in Time for Spring Gardening**

3/2/2011 - NEWS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 25, 2011

Portland Kicks-off Composting Program in Time for Spring Gardening

Public Services asks residents to consider composting to save money and help the environment

PORTLAND, Maine - This month, the City of Portland Public Services Department kicked-off its third annual composting promotion by offering compost bins, wing diggers, kitchen waste pails and rain barrels at discounted prices for purchase. Last year more than 500 compost bins, wing diggers, kitchen pails and rain barrels were sold through the program. In line with Portland's sustainability goals, the City endorses compost as an environmentally responsible alternative to fertilizing lawns and gardens and an efficient way to manage organic waste. Twenty-five percent of the average household's waste consists of yard trimmings and kitchen scraps, which can easily be composted. Home composting combined with recycling and yard waste programs can reduce household waste by up to eighty percent.

The 2011 home compost bin and how-to guide are available at a reduced cost of \$45.00 (original price \$100). The bin has a 10 year warranty, made of 100% recycled plastic and is large enough for a family of five. Kitchen Waste Pails, for kitchen food scraps, are available for \$10.00 each and the wing digger compost turner can be purchased for a discounted price of \$20.00. For the second year, people can also purchase a 55 gallon capacity Rain Barrel for \$60.00 (visit online for more information <http://publicworks.portlandmaine.gov/rainbarrel.pdf>. Orders will be taken in person or via mail at the Department of Public Services, 55 Portland Street, Portland ME 04101 until April 25, 2011. Order forms are available online at <http://publicworks.portlandmaine.gov/compostform.pdf>. Payment in the form of check or money order should be made payable to MRRA (Maine Resource Recovery Association) and must be made when placing your order. All orders will be available for pick-up on Saturday, May 21, 2011 at the Solid Waste Division on District Road (Entrance at 2360 Congress Street) from 7:00 AM -3:00 PM.

"Our goal is to educate the public about the environmental and economic costs of managing organic waste," remarked Troy Moon, Environmental Programs and Open Space Manager for the Department of Public Services. "If we can get Portland residents to consider yardscaping practices and use compost as an alternative to chemical fertilizers for their lawns and gardens, we can remove toxins from our storm water and reduce waste management costs at the same time."

Last year, Portland residents delivered over 2,000 tons of yard waste to Riverside Recycling Center, which cost nearly \$100,000 to manage. Composting yard waste and non-meat food scraps at home instead of disposing of them reduces waste management costs and provides homeowners with a valuable soil amendment. Sustainable lawn care practices such as yardscaping (which includes reduced mowing and aerating along with the use of compost) help the environment by growing lawns that are less dependent on chemicals, fertilizers and watering.

In addition to composting organics, residents are encouraged to "mow high," generating shorter grass clippings that compost better. It is estimated that the average American spends forty hours a year mowing their lawn, releasing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and causing air pollution. In fact, a lawnmower pollutes as much in one hour as an automobile driving 350 miles.

In 2004, 3 million pounds of yard care pesticides were purchased in Maine, more than three times the amount purchased ten years before. The use of pesticides and fertilizers pose a health risk to Portland's water ways. Excess nitrogen, a component of most fertilizers, can cause nuisance algae growth in Casco Bay.

Contact the Department of Public Services at 874-8801 for more information about the composting program. For more information about yardscaping, visit the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District online <http://www.cumberlandswcd.org/>.

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